

## PATENT CLAIMS

1. A computer system for exchanging asset information among a plurality of application programs (3) that are associated with one or more assets (2), where the assets (2) are technical devices or systems, the computer system comprising storage means for storing information, characterized in that a centralized asset information document (4) containing information associated with the assets (2) is stored in the storage means, the document (4) is a text document and is structured as a plurality of sections, each containing a plurality of subsections, where each section corresponds to one of the assets (2) and each subsection corresponds to one of the application programs (3), and where the system is configured to allow each application program (3) to write information to the document (4) and to read information from the document (4).
2. The computer system of claim 1, characterized in that the document (4) is structured according to an extended markup language (XML) standard.
3. The computer system of claim 1, characterized in that the information consists of data representing a characteristic of an asset (2).
4. The computer system of claim 1, characterized in that the information specifies a link to another document that is stored on a computer data storage means and that contains information associated with at least one asset (2).
5. The computer system of claim 1, characterized in that the information specifies a method to access a data server application program that is able to provide information associated with at least one asset (2).

6. The computer system of claim 1, characterized in that the system is configured to allow at least one of the plurality of application programs (3) to write information only into those subsections of the document (4) that are associated with the at least one application program (3).
7. A method for exchanging asset information among a plurality of application programs (3) that are associated with one or more assets (2), where the assets (2) are technical devices or systems, the method being executed on a computer system comprising storage means for storing information, characterized in that the method comprises the following steps:
- a) a first step in which a first application program writes information to a centralized asset information document (4) which contains information associated with the assets (2), is stored in the storage means, is a text document and is structured as a plurality of sections, each section containing a plurality of subsections, where each section corresponds to one of the assets (2) and each subsection corresponds to one of the application programs (3), and
  - b) a second step in which a second application program reads said information from the document (4).